

Respecting Material Goods

Lesson 30 Summary

Lesson Learning Objectives

- The participants will examine the Seventh and Tenth Commandments, on respecting material goods.
- The participants will explore how the Church's social doctrine is applied to vocation and work, and the proper use of wealth.

Content Summary

1. Anytime we take something that doesn't belong to us without the permission of the rightful owner, it is stealing, and it is a sin.
2. Stealing ideas or information from others may be more abstract, but it is still wrong. Examples are cheating, plagiarism (copying someone else's words or ideas without permission or giving proper credit), and pirating music, videos, and software.
3. Regardless of the kind of theft, those who take from others damage the harmony of society.
4. Stealing requires confession, and reparation (making amends) or restitution (returning what you have stolen). You need to give it back or make it right, and ask for forgiveness.
5. Our response when people are hungry and poor should be twofold: (1) to ease the hunger or poverty by donating money or food (charity or almsgiving), and (2) to work for social action to correct the situations that cause hunger and poverty.
6. The teaching of the Church on social issues is called the social doctrine of the Church. The foundation of the Church's social doctrine is stewardship, which means it is up to us to see that the goods of the earth are distributed, in just and charitable ways, to everyone.
7. The Seventh Commandment has a lot to do with work and jobs. Working and paychecks are one way we participate in the distribution of the world's resources. Work is part of our vocation, that is, God's call for our purpose in life.
8. The complex problems of economic injustice clearly hurt poor people, but they also wound the hearts of rich people. A different kind of poverty affects those of us with great material wealth. Poverty of spirit, like material poverty, leads to unhappiness.
9. The Tenth Commandment, "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods," warns us about the human tendency to want what others have. We overcome that tendency by always acting morally toward others and by learning to be humble.

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